

Enlisted Career Newsflash

Quarterly Newsletter of the Enlisted Career Counseling & Evaluation Unit (MMSB-50) / HQMC

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1 – 1ST QUARTER FY12 – JANUARY 2012 (release)



Enlisted Career Counselors Editorial

This issue of the Enlisted Career Newsflash arrives during exciting times, at the beginning of the New Year, 2012. During this time of the year people start thinking about all of the possibilities that lay ahead, and all of the good times and bad that have passed them by. The recent adjournment of the FY-12 MSgt through SgtMaj selection board, on December 16th, 2011; is one of those times. As the Marine Corps continues to push forward in accomplishing our mission of being the Nation's premier 911 force, a lot of Marines are looking ahead to see what they need to be doing to make themselves stand out more competitively in these trying times. Some are continuing in their ways of frequently seeking self improvement and others, having accomplished everything possible, are attempting to do whatever they can to further advance their Marine Corps career. With that being said, there has never been a better time to review your current procedures used in seeking counsel with your Reporting Officials as well as the upkeep and accurateness of your official records.

In the past issue of the Enlisted Career Newsflash (October 2011 release) we talked about preparing for the career decision of the

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MMSB-50

ENLISTED CAREER COUNSELING & EVALUATION UNIT (HQMC)

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Head, Career Counselor
- ❖ **GySgt Bell, R.L.**
Career Counselor
- ❖ **GySgt Kumpula, B.J.**
Career Counselor
- ❖ **GySgt Murphy, J.E.**
Career Counselor
- ❖ **GySgt Black, J.A.**
Career Counselor
- ❖ **LCpl Sedlacek, C.M.**
Admin Clerk

"Some people spend an entire lifetime wondering if they made a difference in the world. But, the Marines don't have that problem".

Ronald Reagan, President of the
United States; 1985

Career Counselors Editorial

From the office of the Enlisted Career Counseling & Evaluation unit
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First Sergeant / Master Sergeant route, the FY-11 SSgt selection board rollup and the new Sergeant Service Limits (per MARADMIN 433/11). In this issue, we will discuss certain factors to consider when being passed over for promotion, the recent FY-12 Master Sergeant through Sergeant Major selection board rollup, as well as look into counseling and being counseled.

We are continuing to improve our internal processes within the Enlisted Career Counseling and Evaluation unit to better support the individual Marine and Marine Leaders across the Corps. Your feedback and suggestions are always welcomed and encouraged. Our sections SMB Organizational e-mail box at: ecounselor@usmc.mil, or the point of contact Marine at the end of this newsletter, is the perfect place to communicate any feedback or suggestions, directly to us. Thank you for your continued Service and Sacrifice to our great Nation. Happy New Year Marines!!!



Semper Fidelis
Enlisted Career Counselors, HQMC

Passed over for Promotion? (Factors to consider)

A pass / non-selection for promotion is something that no Marine looks forward to, or in most cases expects. If this happened to you, then the truth of the situation is that your record was not as competitive as those individuals you were being compared against. This can be difficult to accept since most Marines tend to fall into the theoretical "Type A" personality. This personality is described as: an individual who is ambitious, aggressive, business-like, controlling and highly competitive. In this article, we are going to cover some considerations you should make if you have been passed for promotion.

A comment that we, as career counselors, have heard quite often in the past has been, "I'm in the above zone for promotion so my record is looked at differently than those that are in the promotion zone". This is an incorrect assumption to make. All cases are randomly assigned to the promotion board members prior to the board convening. When it comes time for your case to be briefed and voted on, the Marines in the above zone have the same exact opportunity (brief) as the Marines in the promotion zone. Voting is done by Intended Military Occupational Specialty (IMOS)/Occupational field (OCCFLD) and in alphabetical

order. For more information on the board process visit the promotion branch's website at the following link:

https://www.manpower.usmc.mil/portal/page/portal/M_R_A_HOME/MM/PR

So what do you do when you get passed over for promotion? First, re-evaluate your record and ask what it is saying about you. Are there areas that need improvement or can you do something additional to enhance your record? SNCO promotions are competitive; consequently some MOS's are more competitive than others. You may not be doing anything wrong. You may have an excellent record, yet still not get selected in highly competitive MOS's. This is not the time to feel sorry for yourself or state your record was better than that other individual in your MOS that did get the selection. You can never assume you know what another Marine's record beholds. Now is the time to find where you can make improvements. In most cases, performance can always be improved upon. If you are not falling out as the 100% Relative Value in every one of your reporting senior's (RS) profiles or in the eight-block on every

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Passed over for Promotion (Factors to consider)

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reviewing officer's (RO) comparative assessment, then performance can be improved. As has been covered in past newsletters, seeking counsel with your RS and your RO would be your first step to improving performance. If you haven't been to your resident PME or to your MOS related schooling then it would be ideal to look into attending. Find ways to break yourself away from your peers and stand out to those board members that are viewing you for promotion to the next rank.

A pass for promotion is not a career ender. For some

individuals it's a wake-up call. A number of Marines find they have become comfortable where they are at, therefore individuals may not be progressing towards enhancement. For others, it can be perplexing since they know they have a strong record, however are unsure of how to break away from a strong peer group. Don't make excuses to yourself or about the promotion process. Give yourself an honest self-assessment, seek counsel from your senior enlisted advisors, RS's/RO's, the Career Counselors, etc. Most importantly find ways to improve yourself and enhance your career.



Semper Fidelis,
GySgt Brandi Kumpula, Career Counselor

FY-12 MSgt through SgtMaj selection board rollup

The conclusion of the FY-12 MSgt through SgtMaj selection board ended the busy 2011 selection board season. This board convened on October 18th and adjourned on October 28th for SgtMaj/MGySgt and on December 13th for 1stSgt/MSgt, 2011. As Marines continue to prepare themselves for the upcoming FY-12 GySgt & SSgt selection boards, and the FY-13 MSgt through SgtMaj selection boards, it is always important to review the statistics from previous boards to continue to keep your finger on the pulse of the board from year to year. SNCO promotions are constantly becoming more competitive by the year. This meaning, Marines need to continue to prepare themselves for promotion, as such. Though sometimes

the selection rates from year to year may not reflect an increase in competitiveness (statistically); the caliber of Marines' records in preparation for selection boards has continued to rise by the year. The following statistics are provided for reference. Selection rates reflect the percentage of Marines that were selected in that zone.

For SgtMaj, there were 84 authorized to select with 176 Marines considered in-zones (Above zone, In-zone and Below zone). The overall selection rate was: 55.7%. This number is up from last year's 43.4% which shows a slight rise, but it is important to keep in mind that this FY-12 board did have

IMOS Selection rates:

The Career Counselor's keep on file the selection rates for every active duty enlisted IMOS for the past four years. Selection rates help us show how competitive the specific IMOS was, down to the percentage.

Example:

For 0369 SSgt's on the FY-11 GySgt selection board, there were 66 allocations with 482 Marines in-zones. The overall selection rate was 17%. Since the selection rate was dramatically lower than 50%, this IMOS is very competitive!!

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FY-12 MSgt through SgtMaj selection board rollup

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36 additional allocations, from last year, for SgtMaj. For MGySgt, there were 187 authorized to select with 448 Marines considered in-zones. The overall selection rate was: 49.2%. This number is slightly up from last year's 47.1%, with 18 less allocations and minus 310 Marines considered this year, from last year.

For 1stSgt, there were 103 authorized to select with 1,126 Marines considered in-zones. The overall in-zone selection rate was 9.1%. There is no Above or Below zones for consideration to the rank of 1stSgt. This 9.1% selection rate is significantly lower than the previous 2 years, where it had remained at 13% for the FY-10 & FY-11 selection boards. For MSgt, there were 600 authorized to select with 2,036 Marines considered in-zones. The overall selection rate was: 50.6%. This number is slightly up from last year's 49.5%, which does show a rise, but, it is important to note that this board had 88 less allocations and 204 less Marines considered than last year.

The PME completion rates for each rank show a slight variation from previous years. This year's PME completion rates are as follows. For SgtMaj: 97.7%. 8 Marines from the Above zone and 4 Marines from the In- zone had not completed their required PME. For MGySgt: 92.7%. 41 Marines from the Above zone and 9 Marines from the In-zone had not completed their required PME. For 1stSgt: 88.2%. 133 Marines had not completed their required PME. For MSgt: 81.1%.

804 from the Above zone and 517 from the In-zone had not completed their required PME. These numbers show a pretty significant amount of Marines not completing their required PME for advancement to the next higher rank.

The lack of updated and current promotion photographs, in Marines' OMPF's, continues to be an issue. 5,458 records were pushed from the MMSB servers to the Promotion board room for this board. As of the convening date of the board 2,110 Marines submitted a current and updated photo. 3,336 had outdated photos and 12 Marines had not submitted a promotion photograph at all. Promotion photographs does put a face to the name and provides the twenty one board members with a first impression of the Marine. Most importantly, how much does this Marine care about wanting to be promoted.

This is an important topic to keep in mind when looking at it from a board members perspective. 21 different Marines sit on the board that does not necessarily know the individual Marine from anyone else. When a Marine doesn't submit a promotion photograph, it automatically sends up red star clusters of concern that the Marine might be hiding something. Especially, if there is weight concerns.



Semper Fidelis
GySgt Robert Bell, Career Counselor



FY-12 E8/E9 selection board debrief:

The FY-12 MSgt through SgtMaj selection boards debrief is being compiled by our section at this time. Once this document is completed it will be put on our sections website within the M&RA web portal. We recommend that Marines reference the FY-10, FY-11 & FY-12 debriefs in their entirety, which can help Marines improve themselves and their records for upcoming selection boards.

NEXT ISSUE:

(Enlisted Career Newsflash)

We have not decided on all of the topics for the next newsletter and would like to hear from you regarding what you want to know more about. Please send us your suggestions by e-mail to ecounselor@usmc.mil.

- Enlisted Career Counselors

Counseling and being counseled

Part 1 of a 3 part series on the counseling process



The subject of counseling has been addressed many times. There are different types of counseling as the process serves many ends across the spectrum. Performance counseling is usually done within the leadership structure of a unit to correct or develop, and usually the Marine being counseled understands this process is both necessary and a responsibility of the senior Marine. This does not make individual performance counseling any less significant. Corrective counseling focuses both on the past and the short term future, whereas performance counseling looks deeper into the future towards unleashing performance to meet the needs of the unit and the current mission.

Despite the fact counseling sometimes gets done with a hip-pocket-style and no preparation; performance counseling needs preparation from both the junior and the senior Marine. Though there is attention paid to the process of performance counseling, very little, if any, attention is given to teaching the Marine 'How to be Counseled'. Let us examine the performance counseling process in this article and focus more on being counseled.

Ask any leader and you will hear the old echo of counseling being 'continuous'. Counseling is always happening within the unit and that great things occur as a result. As true as this may be, for the majority, the counseling referred to is either corrective or performance counseling. Sometimes both of these seem to be merged in one process, as they offer both something positive as reinforcement and bring the attention of the junior Marine to some deficiencies that can be improved upon. There is nothing wrong with this process; however it possesses shallow depth and limits the possible outcome. It is important to think outside of the box and consider the concept of 'Developmental Counseling'. This term is used to emphasize a process that needs to happen free of evaluations or corrections; a process that explores the possibilities for the unleashing potential to the fullest measure. This method simply uses past performance as a known reference point, and shoots anchors into what could be, based on talent displayed. In this procedure, much preparation is needed. 'Counseling' and 'How to be counseled' both become equally important.

The Marine Corps User's Guide to Counseling (NAVMAC 2795), is an excellent guide and has some extremely useful information on individual counseling techniques. These can be utilized for all types of counseling, from corrective, to performance, and developmental counseling. It has information on different techniques of counseling, the goals of counseling, and the preparation needed from the senior Marine. Nevertheless, an equal amount of preparation is needed from the junior Marine where counseling is concerned.

"What preparation is really needed from the Marine being counseled and why"? The best way to answer this question is very simple. Anytime a Marine checks into a new unit or has a change of Reporting Senior (RS), this should ring bells that it is time to start preparing to receive the initial counseling. The reasoning in "Why you should prepare" is because every RS's outlooks and expectations are different. Knowing exactly what the expectations are and being able to perform to them will ensure your success with that particular chain of command. For instance, when sitting down to be counseled by your RS, don't just bring something to write with and write on, instead bring a completely blank fitness report so you can go over not only your new or revised billet description, but also each attribute on the report. A lot of the attributes on the fitness report can be viewed differently. Making sure you and your RS have a clear and complete mutual understanding of what his/her expectations are in those attributes will set you up for success.

The Marine Corps' Counseling Program clearly states how and when counseling is required for all grades through the rank of Colonel. Aside from the Initial Counseling Session (ICS), it states Marines in the rank of Corporal through Colonel must be counseled every six months or more often if needed.

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Counseling and being counseled

Part 1 of a 3 part series on the counseling process
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Therefore, counseling outside the parameters of impending evaluations seems both necessary and directed.

With this direction, it is even more important to see the value in how to be counseled. During performance counseling, being told what is expected is one component of the process and minor part of the equation. The MRO can now take the expectations and attempt to surpass them by asking other important questions from the beginning of the reporting period, like: "How many reports have you written on Marines the same rank as me", "What is your RS average?", "What is the highest report averaged report you have written?", and "How many of those high reports have you written?" These questions may sound minimal, but they also give the Marine a target to shoot for in surpassing the expectations as outlined. This may sound like a restricted area to enter into, but face it; the Master Brief Sheet (MBS) will contain the information when the fitness report hits the system at HQMC. It will put into perspective the grades given by the RS in comparison to his/her average and high grades for the Marines of the same rank. The same is true for the Reviewing Officer (RO), who evaluates the Marine's potential on the comparative assessment on the fitness report.

Understanding where one falls according to the RS and RO's profile, should allow the MRO to know exactly where they are in the performance evaluation curve and precisely what needs to be done to improve in specific areas for future reference. The standard "You're doing fine" or "You're coming along", does not say anything vital and cannot truly be called counseling. It fails to explain what needs improvement or how performance is being evaluated. This will be seen as radical thinking by some, but counseling is coaching; in coaching, one needs brutal honesty in keeping with the axiom that "Grades are not given they are earned". It is not wrong to know what one has to demonstrate or do to earn them. Performance counseling is a process that should be eagerly anticipated by both the MRO and the RS, as it develops and shapes performance. It is a win-win situation for all. Nothing is given away or compromised, but much can be improved and attained. Effective leaders know this truth and are brutally honest in the counseling process. This builds trust within the leadership and cultivates loyalty at the same time. In addition, it further leads to an improved morale and higher productivity within the unit. Perhaps this is what General Lejeune had in mind when he articulated that in the relationship between Enlisted and Officer, the same theory applies to all levels of leadership.

In closing, asking a focused question is not, by any means, defiance to authority, but grounds to achieve some level of clarity that should be encouraged at all levels of leadership. In the next two issues of the Enlisted Career Newsflash we will continue this series, which will help further clarify the important topic of counseling.



Semper Fidelis,
GySgt Jeremy Black, Career Counselor

***** Enlisted Career Newsflash Distribution *****

Want to receive this newsletter directly to your E-mail In-box?

(E-mail us at ecounselor@usmc.mil to be added to the Enlisted Career Newsflash distribution list)



We are on the Web:

Our website, through the Manpower & Reserve Affairs (M&RA) web portal, is literally a one-stop-shop for all matters pertaining to a Marines career.

Directions to the website:

- Go to: **USMC.MIL**
- Scroll to the bottom right and click on **Career/Manpower**, under Corps Highlights.
- Click on **Enlisted Career Counselors**, under Top Requests

Career Counselors website updates:

- The Career Tool box is under Construction to enhance its overall effectiveness as a 'One-stop-shop'.
- Updates are constantly being made, so check back often for the most updated information.

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Upcoming Events – (For possible unit planning):

* Quantico SNCOA	12 Feb (Sergeant's course) 15 Feb 2012 (Career course)
* MMSB/MMPR West coast road show	13-17 Feb 2012
* Infantry Unit Leaders course (IULC) (W)	27 Feb 2012
* LOGCOM SNCO Seminar (Mayport, FL.)	28 Feb 2012
* SNCO Food Service course (Ft. Lee, VA.)	1 Mar 2012 (tentative date)
* Camp Lejeune SNCOA 1stSgt/MSgt Seminar	26-30 Mar 2012

NOTE: These upcoming events take place during the 2nd quarter FY12. If you notice that we will be in your area and would like a Counselor to support your unit during that time, e-mail us using the e-mail address below and we will make the necessary arrangements to ensure that the visit will be at no cost or MINIMAL cost to your command.



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